SEISDON UNION
RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

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Penn Fields, Wolverhampton,

24th January, 1898.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

I beg to present to you my Annual Report for 1897 as Medical Officer of Health. I have had the honour of holding this office since 25th of March, 1873 – one quarter of a century next March.

The details of the work accomplished during the past year will be found in the Inspector's Statement at the end of this Report.

The POPULATION, which in 1896 was 13,063, has increased by 353 to 13,416. Wombourn, 61 ; Tettenhall, 190 ; and Kinver, 102.

DEATHS.

The DEATH RATE is somewhat higher, being 15·5 compared with 13·7 in 1896. It is however a fraction below the average for the last 25 years, which is 15·7.

The highest rate during the quarter of a century being 20·9 in 1891 ; the lowest 12·8 in 1881.

The Registration Districts show an increase of 28 deaths in the Union. Wombourn, an increase of 16 ; Tettenhall, a decrease of 4 ; and Kinver, an increase of 8.

Death Rate for the last Decade.

1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897
15·3	13·4	15·3	20·9	19·4	13·0	13.5	16·6	13·7	15·5

Deaths in Registration Districts.

		Males.	Females.	Total.
Wombourn	...	47	52	99
Tettenhall	...	28	29	57
Kinver	...	27	25	52
Total	...	102	106	208

The number of Uncertified Deaths is 3.

I give here a comparative Table of ages at which death occurred during the last 10 years :—

Years.	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 60	60 and upwards.
1888	201	42	8	9	7	36	99
1889	178	30	12	9	12	36	79
1890	202	42	18	8	8	37	89
1891	254	38	21	8	11	48	128
1892	236	48	7	4	8	52	117
1893	160	29	6	6	6	36	77
1894	169	29	15	13	4	*50	†58
1895	213	49	17	7	6	62	72
1896	180	40	11	3	10	48	68
1897	208	51	18	10	10	43	76

* 25 and under 65. † 65 and upwards.

Causes of Death for the last 10 years :—

Causes.	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897
Small Pox	.	..	..	..	..	..	..		..	..
Scarlatina	..	..	6	1	1	..	3	2	2	2
Diphtheria	1	3	...	..	1	.	3	3	3	2
Membranous Croup	..	..	1	..	..	..	.	3	1	..
Fevers. Typhus	..	..	..	..	1	...	..	..	..	.
Fevers. Enteric	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	.	..	..
Fevers. Continued	..	..	..	..	.	..	.	..	..	..
Fevers. Relapsing .. .	..	..	.	..	..	..	.	..	..	..
Fevers. Puerperal	1		..	..	..		..	..	..	..
Cholera	..		..	..	..	..	...	..	..	..
Erysipelas	3	..	2	..	1	..	2	..	..	1
Measles	..	1	2	9	.	..	1	..	2	4
Whooping Cough	3	..	1	11	4	.	1	6	1	6
Diarrhœa and Dysentery	3	3	7	3	4	12	5	3	8	9
Rheumatic Fever	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Ague	..	..		..		..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis	5	9	12	17	8	9	18	9	7	13
Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy	46	36	53	47	73	32	24	55	32	41
Heart Disease	11	22	17	28	17	12	24	16	12	21
Injuries	4	10	4	1	7	9	4	10	1	8
All other Diseases.. ..	123	94	95	135	117	86	84	106	111	100
Totals	201	178	202	254	236	160	169	213	180	208

BIRTHS.

The number of Births registered during the year was 302, or 22 less than last year. Wombourn has decreased 13, Kinver 16, and Tettenhall has increased 7.

The excess of Births over Deaths is 96, in comparison with 144 for the year 1896.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

SCARLET FEVER. There have been 57 cases of this disease notified this year, 64 in 1896. This figure is still high, but lower than the average, which is 68 for the last 7 years, when the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act came into operation in our Union.

There have been 2 deaths from this disease, but the generality of cases have been mild.

The number of cases of this disease has been increased from the fact that some unrecognised cases have been at large, and some brought to light that had been peeling for some considerable time when discovered. No doubt the constant communication with Wolverhampton, where this disease has been particularly prevalent, has had much effect in disseminating the disease throughout the Union. I have examined many of the children at the schools, and some absent ones at their own homes, in the hopes of discovering these cases, but with little success. Where isolation could not be efficiently provided, the patients were removed to the Isolation Hospital. This procedure in the initial cases has had a marked effect in staying the progress of the disease.

DIPHTHERIA. Three cases of this disease have been notified during the year, and two deaths. One death occurred in an infant just brought into the Wombourn district from Wolverhampton. The second death was in the Kinver district. The origin of this latter

case was obscure, the surroundings of the cottage and the water being in a sanitary condition.

TYPHOID FEVER. Only three cases of this disease have been notified; no deaths. One was a case of a maid servant at Wolverhampton, who was sent home with the disease to Pattingham. Another a child in the parish of Swindon. Here the water was polluted by sewage from the fold yard running into the well. This was attended to, and the family was supplied with wholesome water from a well on the farm. The third case arose from unhealthy surroundings, which were at once rectified.

MEASLES AND WHOOPING COUGH. There have been epidemics of these diseases in the villages of Bobbington, Penn, Bradmore, Himley, and Wombourn, and some of the schools closed in consequence. At Codsall some of the children were excluded from attending school for a time on account of Whooping Cough.

The cases of Measles at Wombourn were for a time very serious, in some cases fatal, from the fact that in many instances the disease supervened on Whooping Cough, which had left the children in a most unfavourable state to be attacked.

ERYSIPELAS. Four cases have been notified, one death occurring in an aged female, complicated with cerebral disease.

MEMBRANOUS CROUP. No cases of this class have been notified this year.

INFLUENZA. The number of cases has been under the average of the last few years, and of a milder description.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (NOTIFICATION) ACT. There have been 67 cases notified under this Act, in place of 90 in 1896; 57 of which appear under the head of Scarlet Fever, 38 of which were admitted into our Temporary Isolation Hospital.

CASES NOTIFIED.

	Scarlet Fever.	Erysipelas.	Diphtheria.	Typhoid.	Puerperal Peritonitis.	Croup.	Typhus.	Small-Pox.	Total.
1891	17	6	6	14	—	—	—	—	43
1892	20	5	2	6	—	—	1	1	35
1893	33	9	1	1	—	—	—	—	44
1894	140	12	16	1	1	—	—	2	172
1895	61	7	19	4	—	1	—	—	92
1896	64	8	14	3	—	1	—	—	90
1897	57	4	3	3	—	—	—	—	67
									543

BRATCH TEMPORARY ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

This Institution has been much enlarged and improved since my last Report. It now contains ample room for 20 patients. It is provided with a bath and lavatory, hot and cold water, w.c., water laid on from the Bilston Waterworks, accommodation for separating cases in different stages of the disease, dining and play room for the convalescents, and other necessary essentials for an Institution of this description. It has been occupied by 38 patients during the year. Unfortunately, I have to record the first death in the Institution after a very severe attack. The majority of the children are exceedingly happy, are discharged in better health, and return home with reluctance.

WATER SUPPLY. I have reported upon the unsatisfactory state of the water supply in the Village of Wombourn for many years, and in my last Annual Report mentioned that the Bilston District Council had completed their work for the supply of water to Bilston, and that I anticipated that Wombourn would in a short time be

possessed of this advantage. Shortly afterwards the Mains were laid down throughout the village, but only quite recently have the connections been made to many of the houses, and the rest are now in course of completion.

Early in September I reported to your Authority calling your attention to the condition of the Water Course running through the village, which was always more or less polluted; but of late, owing to continuous wet weather, was totally unfit for drinking purposes, and urging your immediate attention to this state of things.

At the beginning of November, as nothing had been done, although you had been in communication with the Local Government Board, on account of legal difficulties that had arisen, I attended your Council and asked why nothing had been done since I reported as to the serious state of the water supply at Wombourn? That matters, I stated, had become worse; that in fact many of the poorer inhabitants were drinking polluted water; that any day we might have an outbreak of Typhoid Fever or Diphtheria; that with all due respect for the members of your Council, I could not be held responsible should such an outbreak occur; that I felt the great responsibility attached to myself; that I felt the responsibility resting on the District Council, and urged them not to allow the name of the Seisdon Union to be publicly associated with that of Maidstone and Lynn.

It was afterwards proposed and seconded that my representation should be communicated to the Local Government Board.

What effect my appeal may have had I cannot say, but in a short time the work for the connections was commenced, 60 have already been made, and the remainder are in progress.

DRAINAGE WORKS.

At Swan Bank, in the Village of Penn, there has recently been a number of houses erected, and as most of these drained into the adjoining ditches in proximity to the Convalescent Home, the Hospital Authorities complained of the nuisance arising therefrom, and your Council have had the 9 inch sewer in Swan Bank continued for a distance of 173 yards; also 30 yards of 6 inch sewer was laid in continuation of the 9 inch, and 101 yards of 6 inch has been laid in Wakeley Lane, Penn. All the houses are now connected with these sewers, and the nuisances abated.

In the Village of Bradmore 200 yards of 4 inch branch drains have been laid in sewage fields to distribute the sewage upon the land.

At Wombourn about 261 yards of 6 inch sewer has been laid down to carry sewage from Gravelly Hill to the adjoining land, and 30 yards of 4 inch branch drains for distributing the sewage thereon.

At Codsall an open ditch on the side of Elliott's Lane, and also one at the back of houses adjoining the same, have been a great nuisance for a long time. We have prevailed upon the property owners to lay down about 55 yards of 6 inch sewer to abate these nuisances.

SUMMONSES. Four have been issued during the year, three upon persons for neglecting to comply with notices to abate nuisances caused by defective drains and closets in connection with their house property at Kinver and Wombourn. Magistrates' Orders were obtained, and the nuisances have been abated.

Complaints having been made of the overcrowding and insanitary condition of the vans occupied by gipsies camping at Kingswood and Oaken Lawn, notices were served upon them to abate the nuisances of overcrowding, &c. With one exception they at once left the district. In the latter case a summons was issued, and a conviction obtained.

ANALYSIS OF WATER. In two instances water has been analysed and found polluted.

BYE-LAWS. I am pleased to hear that these Laws have been passed by your Council, and are now submitted to the Local Government Board.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, CANAL BOATS, AND BAKEHOUSES ACTS. Under these heads no special difficulties have arisen, and where instructions to abate nuisances have been issued they have been complied with.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
W. SPACKMAN, M.D.,
Medical Officer of Health.

To the Rural District Council of Seisdon.

SUMMARY OF NUISANCES ABATED DURING THE YEAR 1897.

Number of Houses Inspected	540
Number of Notices on hand 31st December, 1896...	12
Number of Notices served	255
Complied with	251
Leaving on the Books 31st December, 1897 ...	16
Letters written relative to Nuisances	119
Bakehouses Inspected	12
Slaughter-houses Inspected	12
Cow Sheds Inspected	76
Canal Boats Inspected	105
Houses Repaired	20
Limewashed	47
Through Ventilation provided	2
Houses Disinfected	53
Overcrowding	8
Water Closets Repaired and Ventilated	3
Washhouses Repaired	9
Filthy Houses Cleansed	2

Summary of Nuisances Abated, &c.—*Continued.*

Privies Removed and Reconstructed	4
Emptied and Cleansed	80
Ashpits Repaired	26
Ashpits built to Privies	2
Privies Repaired	7
Doors and Spouting provided	8
Pan System Adopted	5
Privies Limewashed	20
Privies Drained	10
Soft Water Cisterns Cleansed	2
Drains laid to Houses	47
,, Repaired	44
,, Trapped	37
Cesspits Constructed	2
Cesspools Emptied	2
Foul Cesspools filled up	2
Ditches Cleansed	4
Sewers Ventilated	3
Pigsties Removed	12
Ceased Keeping Swine	1
Catchpits built to Piggeries	1
Foul Pigwash Removed	9
Manure and other Filth Removed	29
Pigsties Drained	8
Cowsheds Limewashed	7
Wells Sunk	2
Wells Cleansed	6
Pumps put to Wells	2
Wells Covered, Repaired, Paved and Channelled ...	3
Wells Deepened	3
Bilston Water laid to Houses	60
Water Analysed—Polluted	2
Wells Closed	1
Persons summoned before the Magistrates ...	4
Total	599

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, and of NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the Year 1897, in the Seisdon Rural District; classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Registration Districts.	Population at all ages.		Registered Births	Aged under 5 or over 5	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.										
									FEVERS.						
	Census 1891	Estimated to middle of 1897			Small-pox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal	Cholera	Erysipelas
WOMBOURN ...	5717	6201	147	Under 5	...	4	1	.	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
				5 upwrds	...	27	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
TETTENHALL ...	3255	3590	87	Under 5	..	...	.	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...
				5 upwrds	.	11	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2
KINVER ...	3165	3625	68	Under 5	...	3	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...
				5 upwrds	.	12	2	...	.	...	...	...	...	...	1
Totals ..	12,137	13,416	302	Under 5	...	7	1	...	.	1	...	.	...	..	...
				5 upwrds	...	50	2	...	...	2	...	...	..	...	4

Thirty-eight cases of Scarlet Fever were removed to the Bratch Temporary Isolation Hospital, in the Parish of Wombourn, and one to the General Hospital of Wolverhampton

TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1897, in the Seisdon Rural District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Registration Districts	Mortality from all causes, at subjoined ages.								Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under 5 years of age.																	
													FEVERS.													
	At all ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards		Small-pox	Scarlatina	Diptheria	Membranous Croup	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerpera	Cholera	Erysipelas	Measles	Whooping Cough	Dyarrhœa and Dysentery	Rheumatic Fever	Phthisis	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy	Heart Disease	Injuries	All other Diseases	Total
WOMBOURN (including Workhouse Infirmary 8 Deaths) ..	99	23	9	6	2	17	42	Under 5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	2	3	1	...	1	12	...	1	10	31
								5 upwrds	...	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	1	1	4	12	6	1	36	68
TETTENHALL	57	20	5	2	4	11	15	Under 5	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	..	...	...	...	...	2	4	...	1	4	...	...	15	26
								5 upwrds	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	5	6	2	15	32
KINVER ..	52	8	4	2	4	15	19	Under 5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	.	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	..	3	...	...	5	10
								5 upwrds	...	...	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	2	...	4	5	9	4	16	41
Totals ..	208	51	18	10	10	43	76	Under 5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	6	6	...	2	19	...	1	30	67
								5 upwrds	...	2	1	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	3	1	11	22	21	7	70	141